



RUSTON LEADERS PLAN FOR FUTURE WITH NEW TREATMENT PLANT

Although Ruston is home to Louisiana Tech University, to many people it's still considered a small town with small town values. However, city leaders were thinking big when they decided to invest millions of dollars and millions of man-hours into revamping its aging sewer system.

After years of compliance orders from the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality for failing to meet its permitted discharge limits, along with complaints from citizens for sewage backups, the city began to study its wastewater system back in 1999. It didn't take long for city officials to realize there would be a lot of work ahead. The sewer system had nearly 40 lift stations and more than 130 miles of collection system that were tied into a treatment plant that was nearly 25 years old. All of the system needed attention.

Working with DEQ, Ruston utilized the department's State Revolving Loan Fund to help finance the project that cost more than \$17 million and took nine years to complete.

The city is already seeing the benefits of the new sewer system. In 2000, Ruston had 18 compliance orders from DEQ. In 2007, it had zero. The water from the treatment plant feeds into Colvin Creek, which eventually flows into Bayou D'Arbonne, which is a popular outdoor recreation spot in the northeast part of the state. The newly installed, state-of-the-art plant helps the city meet its permitted discharge limits, which in turn, ensures the safety of human health and the environment.

With the new wastewater treatment plant, Ruston has room to grow. At one time, the city could handle four million gallons of discharge per day. After the improvements, Ruston will be able to handle up to six million gallons. Citizens will be happy that controls are in place to minimize odors.

The leaders of Ruston addressed an infrastructure problem that many cities throughout the nation are currently facing or will be facing in the near future.- With forward thinking and modern equipment, Ruston is a model that DEQ uses as an example of how to address wastewater infrastructure needs.



Clean wastewater discharge from the Ruston wastewater treatment plant is environmentally sound.



Waste discharge from the new Ruston plant feeds into Colvin Creek and eventually reaches Lake D'Arbonne